

EXPEDITION NEWS

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EXPEDITION NEWS, now in its 18th year, is the monthly review of significant expeditions, research projects and newsworthy adventures. It is distributed online to media representatives, corporate sponsors, educators, research librarians, explorers, environmentalists, and outdoor enthusiasts. This forum on exploration covers projects that stimulate, motivate and educate.

DIVING ANTARCTICA'S NEWLY DISCOVERED ECOSYSTEM

Scientist and explorer Dale T. Andersen, Ph.D. of Lake Placid, N.Y., plans to revisit what he calls an “exciting, new ecosystem” in Antarctica’s mountainous Queen Maud Land – specifically a perennially ice-covered body of water called Lake Untersee that he dove for the first time in 2008. Back then his team discovered large conical stromatolites (mounds) populating the bottom of the lake.

“As far as we know these are the only known modern analogs to a class of conical stromatolites that existed as far back as 3.45 billion years – back to the dawn of life on planet earth,” he said. Andersen is in the process of raising \$750,000 annually for five years to continue research at the site in fall 2012. What makes this project memorable? As Andersen, 56, puts it, “Not too many people Skidoo inland to mountains of Antarctica, make a one meter diameter dive hole through three meters of ice, and go swimming for science.”

Andersen, a scientist at the Carl Sagan Center for the Study of Life in the Universe, Mountain View, Calif., adds, “Our work is a journey of discovery – one that encompasses adventure, curiosity, imagination, leadership and courage along with a burning desire to advance knowledge.”

Through scientific research, technical analyses and syntheses of scientific information, his team hopes to help explain critical emerging issues pertaining to the conservation and preservation of fragile ecosystems in Antarctica. (For more information: 518 524 0993, dandersen@seti.org, <http://daleandersen.seti.org>)

STUDYING AFRICA'S CAPE FUR SEALS

A non-profit organization based in South Africa will embark in December on a scientific conservation expedition to study Africa's only indigenous species of seal, the threatened Cape Fur seals. The expedition, during the peak birthing period, will depart from Cape Town, travel up the West Coast of Africa, through Namibia to just past the Angolan border.

The group is affiliated with The Foundation for Antarctic Research, The Jane Goodall Institute of South Africa, and Seal Alert SA, a rescue and rehabilitation organization regarded as the leading authority on Cape Fur seals that has been operating for over 14 years.

The project's objective is to undertake the world's first complete independent survey of the entire Cape Fur seal species. The group will monitor population dynamics, perform seal rescues, disentangle seals from marine debris, and monitor the effects of ocean pollution on the fragile Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem. (BCLME)

The group says they will guarantee massive brand exposure to an international audience. Sponsorship of \$50,000 USD is being sought, according to campaign manager Pat Dickens. (For more information: 27 76 875 3545, <http://sealepic.weebly.com/>, thesealsofnam@gmail.com).

PHINISI-RIGGED VESSEL SEEKS SPONSORS

Matthew and Athena Downes have been living in Indonesia restoring a phinisi-rigged wooden vessel for the past two years. A phinisi is a traditional Indonesian ship handcrafted on the beaches of Tanah Beru and constructed of ebony "ironwood/ kayu besi" and teak "jati". Phinisi carry seven sails and are designed by the "bugis" tribe of South Sulawesi who gained their reputation hundreds of years ago as the fearsome sailors or "bogeysmen" of the East Indies.

The Downes' *KLM Citra Pelangi* ("the image of a rainbow") was launched in 2000 and is just under 131 feet. They currently hope to become only the second-ever Indonesian phinisi to cross an ocean, and the first phinisi to enter the Gulf of Mexico/Caribbean Sea by sail.

The current crew includes a man named Ismail, the son of Muhammad Hasan who was one of the sailors aboard the *Nusantara Jaya*, the only other phinisi to successfully cross an ocean in 1986 from Sulawesi to Vancouver, Canada via Hawaii. This previous expedition was financed by Suharto, the former authoritarian and polarizing president of Indonesia for 31 years (which kept it from becoming a huge international success as well as kept it from being fondly remembered by present day Indonesians).

The three Downes moved onto the *Citra Pelangi* in September 2009 with a mission and a dream. Along with a crew of dedicated professionals, they hope to make history by

studying and preserving nautical life, assuming they can raise \$500,000 to assist with the ocean voyage and the making of a feature-length documentary.

As a team, the Downes and the ship owners William and Johnna Anderson have spent the last two and a half years, strengthening, streamlining and preparing the ship for this voyage. They hope to depart from Benoa, Bali, Indonesia in Fall 2012 to cross the Indian Ocean, navigate through the Red Sea and Mediterranean, and then sail trans-Atlantic to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the West Indies – approximately 12,500 nautical miles.

(For more information: Matthew and Athena Downes, www.mayantriangle.com, seawolf@mayantriangle.com, citra.pelangi.charters@gmail.com, +62 (0) 821 8744 5120)

EXPEDITION UPDATE

Cameron Revisits Ocean's Dark Frontier

At 5:52 p.m. EDT, Sunday, Mar. 25, James Cameron, the *Titanic* director and adventurer, successfully descended to the deepest point on earth, Challenger Deep, 35,756 feet below sea level in the Mariana Trench near Guam, reports James Clash on www.askmen.com.

The last time that was done by humans was a half century ago by U.S. Navy Lt. Don Walsh and the late Swiss explorer Jacques Piccard in the bathyscaphe *Trieste* (see *EN*, March 2012). Appropriately enough Walsh was in the Pacific to congratulate Cameron as he exited his one-man submersible, being among the first to shake the famous director's hand.

Cameron's first words: "We did it. We all did it as a group!" But quickly Cameron looked over at Walsh in acknowledgement. "It hasn't changed a bit since you were down there. I saw a skid mark of some kind. It might have been from you!"

Cameron then went on to describe his solo experience. "It was bleak. It was like the moon. Man, that is a long way down. When you go past Titanic's (depth), then past Bismarck's, then past where the Mir (submersible) can go – you're still only half or two-thirds of the way there. It's a heck of a ride."

Walsh shared with *EN* an e-mail sent to him by Cameron in early March, following Cameron's successful 26,247-ft./ 8,000-meter dive to the bottom of the New Britain Trench. In it the creative force behind *Avatar* writes, "Sitting down there at 27000', alone in the dark, with no comms, no contact whatsoever with the world so far above, and nothing but the ingenuity of the engineering to get me back ... it's simultaneously scary and exhilarating. It's the precipice we put ourselves on by choice, to test ourselves and our machines."

Read an interview of Don Walsh written by James Clash here:

http://www.askmen.com/celebs/interview_400/460_don-walsh-the-right-stuff.html#ixzz1qFHy8QEX

EXPEDITION NOTES

Anker Returns to Everest

Famed mountaineer and The North Face athlete Conrad Anker returns to Everest with a team of climbers attempting the summit this spring. Anker, along with fellow The North Face athlete and *National Geographic* photographer Cory Richards, will revisit Everest's past as they attempt to repeat the historic climb of the 1963 National Geographic-sponsored American Mount Everest Expedition (AMEE) almost 50 years after the first American ascent to the summit via the West Ridge.

Anker and Richards will climb Everest's West Ridge, a route seldom visited. Their alpine-style climb will be documented by Richards for a feature in *National Geographic* magazine to be published in early 2013 and covered in real time on the magazine's May issue iPad app starting April 16.

Anker and Richards' efforts will be complemented by a second team of climbers from The North Face global athlete team, including Kris Erickson, Hilaree O'Neill, Emily Harrington and Sam Elias. This team will attempt the summit simultaneously on the Southeast Ridge.

The scientific portion of the expedition involves geologists from Montana State University (MSU) on the Southeast Ridge team and medical specialists from Mayo Clinic at Base Camp. MSU professor and structural geologist, Dr. David Lageson, will focus on research and education in partnership with Philip Henderson of the National Outdoor Leadership School and Travis Corthouts, a geology graduate student who will conduct research from Everest Base Camp. Also part of the Southeast Ridge team will be *National Geographic* writer Mark Jenkins. Some members of this team will contribute to an online science curriculum developed for fifth graders by Montana State University.

Anker said, "Everest remains a beacon of exploration. The ability to share the experience of Mount Everest with schoolchildren while conducting science is the foundation of our expedition."

Lageson's team will re-survey the summit of Mount Everest with the latest and most precise GPS equipment available to obtain a reading of the current height of the mountain, which was last reliably measured in 1999.

(For more information: National Geographic – www.natgeo.com/everest; The North Face – www.thenorthface.com/everest; Montana State University – www.montana.edu/everest; Mayo Clinic – <http://advancingthescience.mayo.edu>

Big Weekend at The Explorers Club

The biggest weekend of the year for The Explorers Club features its famous annual dinner – at 108 years-old it's one of New York's longest-running benefit dinners

attracting a range of expedition supporters, from Buzz Aldrin to *SNL*'s Dan Aykroyd. The next day, Mar. 18, featured a series of presentations at the East 70th Street HQ where hundreds packed into the Clark Room, the terrace and second floor library to learn about the activities of fellow members. Here are some highlights:

- **Bedazzled** – Donald C. Johanson, annual dinner committee chair, kicked off the evening by proclaiming, “Humans have always been on the move ... to explore and be dazzled by the unknown.” Speaking of unknowns, he later said in reference to the Culinary Curiosities served during the cocktail hour, “I never had duck tongue in my life and won’t have one ever again.” (Editor’s note: we’re guessing he wouldn’t have liked the bull penis either).
- **Blessing of Awareness** – “We can’t ride on the laurels of early explorers,” said Honorary Chairman Jim Fowler. “Humans are the only species that can contemplate life and death and time in between. I call that the ‘burden of awareness.’ We also have the blessing of awareness – we’re the only species that can find out who, what, where we are. “We’ve got to learn how exploration can affect human welfare,” said Fowler.
- **Snap, Crackle Pop** – Philip J. Currie, recipient of The Explorers Club Medal, admitted that he was inspired to focus his life’s work on dinosaurs after opening a Rice Krispies cereal box at the age of six and finding a toy dinosaur inside. His parents made him finish the cereal before he could get at the toy. He brought the dinosaur to the dinner to show the audience.
- **What is Exploration?** – Frederick “Fritz” Selby, honored with a Citation of Merit, asked, “what is exploration?” then answered, “the satisfaction of curiosity. Without curiosity there are no explorers.”
- **Failure is an Option** – Johan E. Nilson said during his return of The Explorers Club flag, “Failure must be an option because by taking risks, you reach the highest level of possible.”
- **Saving Oceans** – “The importance of saving the oceans is the new frontier for exploration and the stakes couldn’t be higher, said Susan Shaw, recipient of a Citation of Merit. “This is what explorers do: we study terrain, we take on challenges and we dive in and take risks in the process.”
- **Further One Goes** – Julianne M. Chase, recipient of the Edward C. Sweeney Medal, paraphrased Lao Tzu, “What is crystal clean to me after traveling the world, the further one goes the less one knows.”
- **Japanese Nooky** – The next day, Mead Treadwell, Club member and Lieutenant Governor of Alaska, spoke about “Unsolved Mysteries of the Arctic.” “People forget that America became an Arctic nation in 1867 with the purchase of ‘Seward’s Folly,’ a deal

with the Russians that the *New York World* derided as a ‘sucked orange.’” He continued, “The planet Mars is mapped with better maps and resolution than the state of Alaska.”

He worries that the magnetic North Pole is migrating to Siberia along with the loss of the aurora borealis. “That means Japanese tourists who want to procreate under the Northern Lights will go to Siberia.” He advocates the use of lighter-than-air airships to carry 60 tons of material at a time, a better alternative to building trucking roads in wilderness areas.

- **Nichols Elected TEC President**

The Club’s board of directors selected Alan Nichols, from Belvedere, Calif., as its 38th president since the Club was founded in 1904. Nichols, 82, an explorer who specializes in Tibet and China, and the world’s sacred mountains, replaces Lorie Karnath, who served the Club for three years.

Nichols’ experiences and knowledge of Tibet come from many years of study and journeys to the sacred mountains of Bhutan, China, Kashmir, Ladakh (“Little Tibet”), Nepal, and Sikkim. He was the first Westerner to circumambulate sacred Mt. Kailas in southwestern Tibet after Tibet was opened to foreigners. He was also the first to bicycle the entire Silk Road from Xian, China’s historic capital, to the Mediterranean, a feat achieved in four stages from 2001-08 with the help of his wife and others.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"*Jacques Cousteau always used to say, 'If we knew what was there, we wouldn't have to go. So we have to go because we don't know what's there.'*" – Adventurer and filmmaker James Cameron following his historic dive late last month to the Mariana Trench.

EXPEDITION FOCUS

One Hundred Years Later, *Titanic* Rusticles Preserve Relics of Lost Liner

Charles Pellegrino, a scientist and author from Long Beach, N.Y., was conducting forensic archaeology and bio-archaeology studies at the *Titanic* site on September 10, 2001 (James Cameron's "Ghosts of the Abyss" deep robot penetration). He was there to explore both the bow and stern sections of the *Titanic* during two dives and surfaced aboard a Russian research vessel into a changing world. Little did he know that day he would apply the same physics he studied on the *Titanic* (column-collapse, downblast, shock cocoons, surge clouds) to his later studies at Ground Zero in New York.

As the *Titanic* disaster commemorates its 100th anniversary this month, Pellegrino, 58, shares his observations of the ship’s final resting place:

“Every bit as amazing as the *Titanic* herself was the wildlife that surrounded her: Cephalopods that resembled bats and even gliding polynoses, along with unidentified

organisms (possibly related to comb jellies) known to us only as ‘flashing Milkduds,’ blazing out so brilliantly that they left after-images burned briefly into one's eyes. The rust-icicles, named ‘rusticles,’ turned out to be an interconnected microbial reef that, in addition to turning the more than 450 foot-long bow section of the *Titanic* into one of the largest organisms on Earth, was helping to preserve paper and wood while, at the same time, dissolving sheets of steel and slowly avalanching decks one upon another,” Pellegrino tells *EN*.

“Glacier-like, the rusticle reef was building a fossil bed in which the ceramic tiles and traces of wood from the Turkish Baths, and perhaps even the now microbially sheathed mail bags nearby, would long outlast the pyramids – and, along with other ocean wrecks, might somehow speak for human civilization, 50 million years from now, long after the *Titanic* itself falls like a house of cards during only the next few decades.

The third and final installment in Pellegrino’s trilogy about the Titanic expeditions, *Farewell, Titanic* (Wiley, 2012), comes out this month.

(For more information: sammiekatz_10018@yahoo.com, www.charlespellegrino.com)

Is the Famed Vinland Map Authentic?

The medieval Viking explorations in the North Atlantic had a huge boost of interest with Yale University's discovery in 1965 of the Vinland Map, generally considered to date back to 1430. But soon after, doubts about the map's authenticity spiked, with claims of 20th Century anachronistic pigments in its ink.

James Enterline, a retired mathematician and computer scientist from New York has worked at the center of this controversy, with field research in the Arctic, numerous papers in scholarly journals, and two books published by Doubleday and Johns Hopkins University Press. He maintains that while the map has not been proven authentic, neither is the evidence marshaled against it conclusive.

A nucleus of pro-authenticity workers are trying to dispel the ink-anachronism evidence by various paths – showing that exactly such inks did exist in the middle ages; showing how modern pigments could have been accidentally introduced in modern times; or showing that chemical arguments in the anachronism theory are faulty. But none of this could establish that the map is in fact authentic, and leaves it still open to some other kind of argument.

Enterline believes the best way to establish authenticity would be by what is called "internal evidence," some aspect of the map that was necessarily present from its beginning and a modern forger could not have introduced. Enterline has discovered multiple cryptograms in the map's inscriptions that may provide just such an aspect.

Cryptography, surprisingly, was an art practiced by medieval scribes to show off their skills to one another, very much analogous to the original intent of modern computer

virus writers. The Vinland Map cryptograms contain identification of their writers.

At age 79, Enterline is learning Latin with the intent to research these identities in medieval scriptorium libraries. Establishing their reality could give proof of the map's authenticity.

(For more information: James Enterline, jenterli@jenterli.cnc.net)

MEDIA MATTERS

Amazon Chief Looking for Sunken Apollo 11 Engines

For more than four decades, the powerful engines that helped boost the Apollo 11 mission to the moon have rested in the Atlantic. Now Internet billionaire and space enthusiast Jeff Bezos wants to raise at least one of them to the surface, according to a Mar. 28 story in the *Associated Press*.

In an online announcement, the Amazon.com CEO and founder said he is drawing up plans to recover the 19-ft. sunken engine, part of the mighty Saturn V rocket that launched Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins on their moon mission.

The five engines, which produced nearly 7.7 million pounds of thrust, dropped into the sea as planned minutes after liftoff in 1969. Four days later, Armstrong and Aldrin walked on the moon.

Bezos acknowledged the engines were the property of NASA, but said he hoped they will be displayed in museums.

In 2009, a private company salvaged Gus Grissom's Mercury capsule that accidentally sank in the Atlantic after splashdown in 1961. It was restored and displayed at the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center.

(See the Mercury 7 on display here:

<http://www.kansastravel.org/hutchinson/kansascosmosphere.htm>)

Man vs. Wild Star Lost in TV Wasteland

Discovery Channel has terminated its relationship with Bear Grylls, the British television personality and star of the network's *Man vs. Wild*. The severing of the relationship, which began in 2006 when *Man vs. Wild* launched on Discovery, comes after the network has allegedly been unable to get Grylls to participate in two unannounced projects he was contracted for, say sources. The sixth season of *Man vs. Wild* wrapped in August, according to *The Hollywood Reporter* (Mar. 13).

Grylls spokesperson Heather Krug, an executive at Rogers & Cowan, tells *THR*, "Bear's goal has always been to make life-empowering shows for his many fans around the globe, and he has taken great risks to bring Discovery such award-winning programming over seven seasons.

"Unfortunately, Bear and Discovery have not been able to come to mutual agreement on new programming, and he disagrees with Discovery's decision to terminate current productions. Bear has loved the *Man vs. Wild* journey and looks forward to producing further cutting-edge content again soon for his loyal audience."

Grylls, 37, has parlayed his fame as an extreme outdoorsman into an international media career. He's written nearly a dozen books, many of them survival guides. His memoir *Mud, Sweat and Tears* – due to be published in the U.S. in May – already is a best seller in England and Australia. He's landed numerous endorsement deals including with Dockers and Degree deodorant. There's a *Man vs. Wild* video game, he has an iPhone app, and his clothing line is sold at REI and Walmart.

In 2007, the show was briefly taken off the air in the U.K., and Discovery began airing it with a disclaimer explaining Grylls was not in fact left alone to survive in the wild. In subsequent episodes, Grylls directly addresses the crew, and in the interest of transparency, each season featured a making-of episode, according to *THR*'s Marisa Guthrie.

EXPEDITION CLASSIFIEDS

Infinite Safari Adventures – Other companies offer wildlife safaris, but only Infinite Safari Adventures adds adventure to the mix. Climb Kilimanjaro, ride horses in the bush, scuba dive, ride a hot air balloon, track wild chimps and explore exotic Zanzibar. These are just a few of our exciting options. Or enjoy something only we offer: kayak the warm waters off the Tanzanian Coast. Someday is Now! Alan Feldstein 888-745-2925, adventure@infinitesafariadventures.com

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Life on Ice – Looking for a great adventure read? Lonnie Dupre's new book *Life on Ice* covers 25 years of arctic exploration, including the world's first circumnavigation of Greenland and One World Expedition, a summer expedition to the North Pole. Over the past two decades, Dupre has lived and traveled with the Arctic Inuit, bringing their culture to the rest of the world. Dupre reveals the secret of survival in a world with quickly shifting weather patterns: respecting nature in all its elements and living in sync with the world we inhabit. The guiding force behind *Life on Ice* is the same as the impetus for Dupre's expeditions: the desire to make a difference in the world.

Life on Ice includes a 32-page color insert of extraordinary Arctic images, maps and is autographed. Order now through the Lonnie Dupre Store. <http://lonniedupre.wazala.com/>)

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Ripped From the Pages of *EN* – Read the book that was spawned by *Expedition News*. Autographed copies of *You Want to Go Where? – How to Get Someone to Pay for the Trip of Your Dreams* (Skyhorse Publishing) – are available to readers for the discounted price of \$14.99 plus \$2.89 s & h (international orders add \$9.95 s & h). If you have a project that is bigger than yourself – a trip with a purpose – learn how it's possible to generate cash or in-kind (gear) support. Written by *EN* editor Jeff Blumenfeld, it is based upon three decades helping sponsors select the right exploration projects to support. Payable by PayPal to blumassoc@aol.com, or by check to *Expedition News*, 28 Center Street, Darien, CT 06820 USA.

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